

Bataan Vet New Arsenal Chief

**Col. Ronald Currens
Comes from Tenn.**

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Col. Ronald B. Currens, a native Illinoisan who fought the Japanese at Bataan and Corregidor and then was imprisoned by them for more than three years, yesterday was named as the new commanding officer of Joliet Arsenal.

Col. Currens comes here from Milan, Tenn., where he has commanded the Milan Arsenal.

The appointment was made by Brig. Gen. Joel G. Holmes, commanding general of the Ordnance Ammunition Center, who directs the army's nationwide program of ordnance ammunition manufacturing from OAC headquarters in Joliet.

AS COMMANDING officer, Col. Currens will direct all activities of the 4,000-worker Joliet Arsenal, which the Ordnance Corps regards as one of its most important plants.

He succeeds Lt. Col. Raymond C. Costabile, who has been in charge of the Arsenal for the past five years, and who is leaving for a European tour of duty early this month.

A native of Macomb, and a graduate of Western State Teachers' College in 1925, Col. Currens was a high school teacher for two years at Highland, and then became a civilian employee of the Ordnance Corps, starting as an ammunition inspector. In the following 14 years he was assigned to various installations in the United States, and in 1939 was sent to Manilla, where he was chief ammunition inspector of the Philippine department.

COL. CURRENS left Manilla on Dec. 24, 1941, a few days before the city was captured by the Japanese, and went to the Bataan Peninsula. Being a reserve officer, he was placed on active duty there on Dec. 31. He was interned by the Japanese after the fall of Corregidor on May 6, 1942.

After three weeks' internment by the Japanese on Corregidor, he was taken to a military prison some 40 miles away on the mainland, where several thousand American prisoners were interned. For the following 40 months, he existed in a prison camp in Japan, despite illness and insufficient food.

A month after V-J Day in 1945, Col. Currens was shipped back to the United States and recuperated until May 1946, when he reported for duty at Milan Arsenal in Tennessee as safety and security officer. In the following three years, he became operations officer, then executive officer at Milan.

IN JUNE 1949 he was appointed commanding officer at Indiana Arsenal, Charlestown, Ind., where he served for 18 months. He then attended the Armed Forces Staff college at Norfolk, Va., graduating in July 1951. Col. Currens was then made commanding officer of Milan Arsenal where he has served until the present time.

Mrs. Currens, the former Dorothy A. Standard of Macomb, has joined her husband here, and with their son, Ronald B., Jr., 2, they are now living at the Arsenal.